

Remarks:

1. The title of the invention has been amended at the Examiner's request.
2. Claims 1 and 3-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Okazaki et al. US 5,915,416.
 - a. Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of previous claim 3. Okazaki does not disclose a valve housing formed with at least one ball retainer rib defining a supply port having a first diameter, the ball being disposed between the rib and valve seat and defining a second diameter larger than the first diameter such that the rib retains the ball from passing outward through the supply port. The ball retainer of Okazaki is a separate piece that is thermally caulked in place (Column 6, lines 8-11). This does not offer the ease of assembly facilitated by the ball retainer rib of the instant invention, nor the reliability that results from the absence of a fastening joint. Applicants contend that this patentably distinguishes the instant invention over the prior art.
 - b. Claims 4-6 depend directly from currently amended claim 1 and for at least the reasons cited in 2(a) above, applicants contend that they are in condition for allowance.
 - c. Claim 7 has been amended to include the limitations of previous claim 8. The reasoning for allowability for currently amended claim 7 is the same as currently amended claim 1 (see 2(a)). Applicants contend that claim 7 is now in condition for allowance.

- d. Claim 8 has been canceled.
 - e. Claims 9-11 depend directly from currently amended claim 7 and for at least the reasons cited in 2(c) above, applicants contend that they are in condition for allowance.
3. Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okazaki et al. US 5,915,416 in view of Teranishi US 5,282,329. Applicants respectfully point out that Teranishi discloses a structural gap between the rod and the ball when the coil is being energized. (Column 5, lines 32-48). Applicant's invention teaches the gap between the ball and the rod when the coil is deenergized. Of course, Applicants have a gap between the ball and rod in the instant invention in order to allow the rod to gather momentum before engaging the ball, thus allowing a quicker response time for the opening of the valve. Teranishi withdraws the rod from the ball to decrease hysteresis in the system. Applicants contend that Teranishi does not disclose applicant's invention. In addition, as claim 2 depends directly from claim 1, for at least the reasons cited in 2(a), applicants contend that claim 2 is in condition for allowance.

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's thorough examination of the instant application.

Applicants believe that the application is now in condition for allowance and look forward to a timely Notice of Allowance.

Appl. No. 10/783,567

Amdt. Dated **28-FEB-2006**

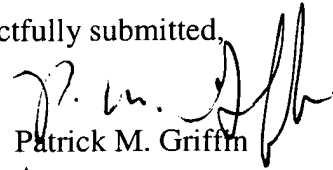
Reply to Office Action of December 19, 2005

Although no fees are believed due, the Commissioner is authorized to charge our Deposit

Account No. 50-0831 for any fees or credit the account for any overpayment.

Respectfully submitted,

By



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Date: **28-FEB-2006**